

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
INFORMATION DIRECTORATE

**A SUMMARY OF THE
EXPERIENCE OF THE REVOLUTION
IN THE DEMOCRATIC YEMEN**

**from the armed struggle until the
Quinquennial Plan**



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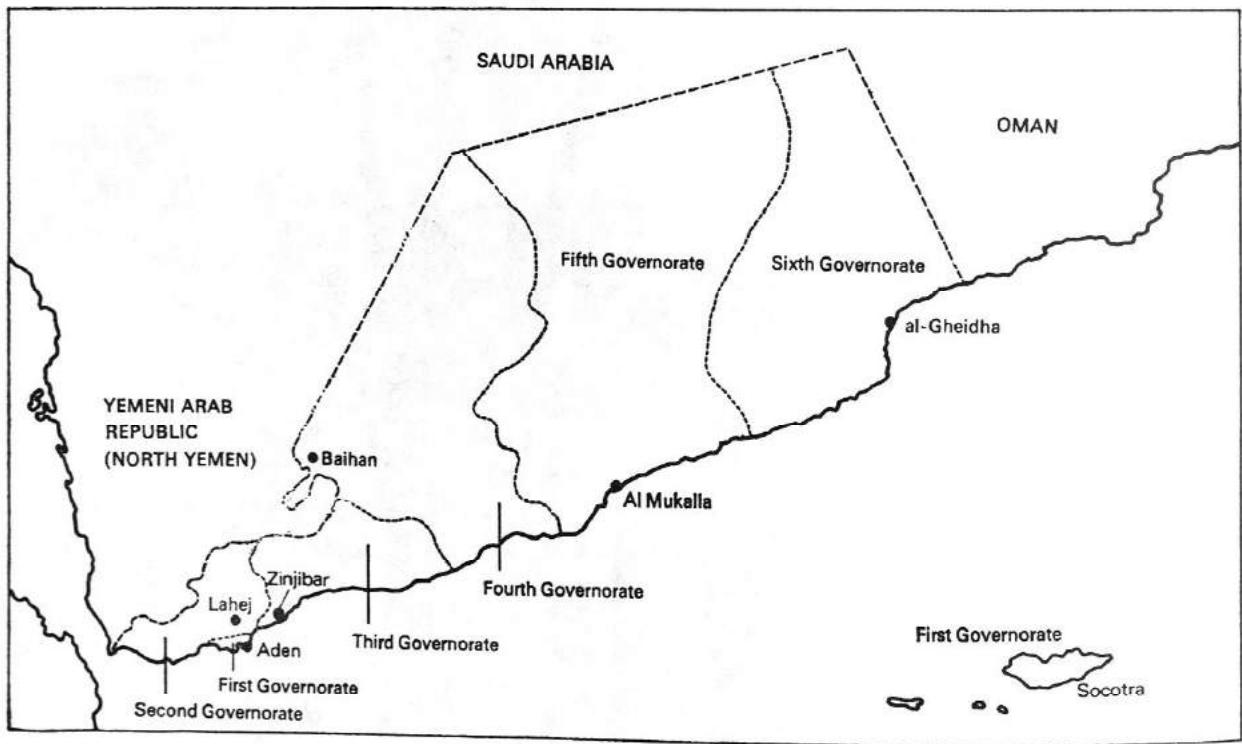
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Yemeni peasants participating in building a new society.

Text of the interview was carried out by the Lebanese magazine ALHURRIYA with Comrade Abdul Fattah Ismail, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the National Front Political Organization on the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of the 22nd June Rectification Movement.



The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

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PART ONE

STAGE OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE UNTIL

INDEPENDENCE

Q.1: The beginnings of the revolution pose many questions as they are an integral part of the history of theory and practice. How did you make the decision to engage in armed struggle, and what were the political and military preparations? What was the effect of the 26th September revolution and Nasserism thereupon? How was it received by the masses, the colonialists, and reactionary organs, and the nationalist forces? What was the political identity of the National Front then?

A.1: Every colonized people naturally are a people who groan under two forms of injustice: colonial injustice on the one hand and class injustice on the other hand. Our people in the southern part of the Yemeni region suffered from both types of injustice. Throughout the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, the people had exercised different forms of national struggle and waged various methods of peaceful struggle for their national liberation from British colonialism.

At the outset of the sixties some political organizations were beset with ideas of armed struggle. These, in essence, were an embodiment of their rejection of the colonialist presence in the country and were at the time the last resort. The experience of peaceful struggle had proved futile in undertaking the real tasks of national liberation as a result of the colonialist character of British imperialism...in fact the character that is chronic of all colonizers in our present epoch.

The Arab Nationalist Movement, which had begun to occupy an important position in the political life among other organizations, had adopted armed struggle as a path to national liberation. Thus, in the booklet issued by the Movement at the close of the fifties, "Our Attitude to the Fake Federation", affirmed that there remained no means, other than armed struggle, for booting out British colonialism. It is necessary to point out that the armed struggle experience, in Cuba and Algiers, had left its influence for the zealous armed struggle against the British colonizers.

However, our estimation of this issue was that we could not commence with the armed struggle before bringing about the downfall of the priestly Imamic rule in Sana'a. This rule constituted the weakest and shakiest link in the Yemeni area, in comparison with the colonialist feudal system, in the southern part of the homeland. Our estimation of this issue was correct, as was confirm-

ed by the struggle experience of our people. Thus, after a brief period following the conviction for the need for armed struggle against British colonialism, the 26th September revolution took place. The priestly Imamic system fell and a Republican system was established. The suitable conditions were created and the whole Yemeni people expressed their desire for national liberation.

At that time, the political situation in the Yemeni area that had resulted from the victory of the 26th September revolution and establishment of the Republican system in Sana'a, paved the way for transferring the armed struggle from the vista of theoretical belief to the vista of scientific application. In this direction two fundamental factors arose that made commencement of the armed struggle imperative:

First: The Republican system in Sana'a, in addition to facing the military blockade and attack unleashed from the Saudi borders by the Royalist mercenary troops and others, was at the same time facing a similar military blockade and attack from the artificial borders of the southern part of the region by mercenary recruitment centers and dispatched in sabotage teams to the areas controlled by the Republican system. All of the borders, particularly the eastern and desert borders that intermingled with Saudi lands, were centers of British activity opposed to the Republican system in Sana'a.

Second: The predominant rearguard for any armed struggle in the southern part colonized by British colonialists had come into being. This meant that the Republican system in Sana'a had become that rear, capable of playing the Yemeni Nationalist role in supporting the armed struggle against colonialist Britain for liberating the southern part of the Yemeni homeland. The other aspect of the issue is that the course of the Yemeni people's national struggle, in defense of the September Republic, placed before the national movement in the southern part of the Yemeni region the task of undertaking a role in protecting this Republic, which was a symbol of the liberation awakening of the Yemeni people. Here, we may mention only the issue and role of the political organizations in the process of national liberation on the Yemeni scale generally and before the masses of the Yemeni people: workers, peasants, and students from both parts. These groups, in their thousands, sprang from the National Guard for defending the September Republic.

The national movement in the southern part of the homeland was faced with two tasks: the task of defending the September Republic by foiling British and Royalist sabotage unleashed from the south and the task of benefitting from the historic circumstance brought about by the September revolution. National liberation would be

completed in the whole region, while continuing the struggle for regaining areas occupied by Saudi Arabia in 1934, i.e. the Yemeni areas of Asir and Najran. The decision to carry out armed struggle was based upon the objective and subjective conditions in the whole of Yemeni society.

In the beginning, our aim was the establishment of a National Front to lead the armed struggle. We attempted in our dialogue with the rest of the organizations and, in particular, the Baath Party and the Peoples' Socialist Party to produce a common commitment to armed struggle. However, it appears that such organizations had not until then rid themselves of the ideas of peaceful struggle believing that the peaceful path was still the one leading to national independence. Our commitment to armed struggle was based on an analysis of the subjective and objective conditions. We were determined that these conditions were suitable for starting struggle in the southern part of the region.

In May, 1963 there was in Sana'a a dialogue between the Arab Nationalist Movement and other political organizations which can be considered both public and clandestine organizations. Both of these had good relations with the Movement. In this meeting the National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied South Yemen was established on the basis of adopting armed struggle as a means of booting out the English colonialists. At that time the clash between the formation of tribes - a section of the National Front - and the British troops began to occur in the Radfan area. It was imperative that this armed uprising in Radfan should be transformed into the launching of the 14th October revolution, which was the basis of the national struggle for liberation from British colonialism. In this manner the National Front was created in Sana'a.

During this period, the Arab forces had arrived at Sana'a to participate in the defense of the September revolution in the face of the Saudi-Royalist attack and the British military aggressions from the south. At that time, relationships within the nationalist movement were beset with hostile disagreements and party squabbles. Though relationships between Baath and Nasserism had reached a great degree of animosity and insults, the relationship between the Arab Nationalist Movement and the deceased President Abdul Nasser was a very good one. Because of the good relationship between the Movement and Abdul Nasser, and because of the dangers surrounding the 26th September revolution, in addition to the maturing of the internal conditions for beginning the armed struggle, the Arab Nationalist Movement was able to pick up the indicators of the liberation struggle in the area and push it forward. The clash between the Egyptian and British forces on the "borders" between the Republican Yemen - the "North" - and the colonized Yemen -

the "South" - was paving the way for embodiment of the good relationship between the Movement and Abdul Nasser by supporting the armed action in the south with arms. Therefore, Abdul Nasser supported the Arab Nationalist Movement adopting the armed struggle and expressed his readiness to provide arms to the National Front through the presence of the Arab forces in Sana'a and Taiz.

Following the availability of conditions paving the way for progress on the path of armed struggle, we undertook widespread political and military preparation for the armed struggle. We began the training of the elements that would shoulder the responsibility for military and commando operations. Training lasted a short time in the camps of the National Front in the North. Besides that, we had started bringing in and storing arms in secret places and began forming small teams whose tasks were to undertake commando operations. In this way did the 14th October revolution of 1963 start.

On the political side the National Front leadership began widespread activity in Sana'a and Taiz, through the voice of the Arabs' broadcasting stations, to make the masses aware of the armed struggle as the only road leading to the achievement of national independence. The internal bulletin of the Front, "Liberation", also played a great role in linking the Front members with the issues of the armed struggle and national liberation. World public opinion began to realize that there was a people struggling for liberation from British colonialism.

If we were to speak about the reactions that were engendered by the first operation, the Radfan operation, we will note that the broad masses with a real interest in national liberation received with great enthusiasm this operation, which was a source of pride to them. They had found in the armed struggle the practical embodiment of the avenging popular spirit against the crime of occupation perpetrated by the English colonialists in the thirties of the last century.

As for British colonialists, they believed that the Radfan operation was no more than a tribal mutiny and could be speedily ended by one blow dealt by the Air Force or the Infantry. However, experience later proved that the armed mutiny of the simple and toiling Radfan people far exceeded the British estimation of the issue. It was indeed the beginning of a revolution. It is true that Britain used all of its military might in the form of air force, infantry, and artillery but it was unable to crush the armed mutiny. It was thereafter compelled into sending in a strike force and the battles were transformed into direct clashes between the British troops and the revolutionaries. They employed hand to hand fighting to the extent that the British declared the ferocity of the fighters by

describing them as the "Red Wolves". The British colonialist organs had made little of the armed mutiny in Radfan but were forced in the end to admit the bitter truth that it was facing a revolution. In fact the stooge reactionary forces of Sultans and lackeys also made little of the armed mutiny in Radfan and thought it would not withstand the British military might. Therefore they did not begin to consider that they were facing a revolution in actuality, except after the revolution began to reach their pinnacles in more than one area in the countryside.

The attitude of the national movement towards the armed mutiny varied: negative among some forces, and sympathetic among other forces. All of the varying attitudes reflected the differences between the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Baath Party and the animosity engulfing all of the nationalist parties towards the communist movement in the Arab world. All of this was transferred to Yemen and constituted the basis of relations between the various sections of the Yemeni national movement in its capacity as an organizational extension of the political parties in the Arabian East.

When the revolution broke out in October, 1963 with the Radfan Operation, it was natural that those differences should form the basis of attitudes towards the revolution. Thus, the Salafi Youth Organization - now the People's Democratic Party - took a belittling attitude towards the revolution of "Arab Dervishes", according to the description given by that party's leader Abdulla Al-Asnag.

As for the Baath Party its attitude was indirect and was at the time similar to the attitude of the Peoples' Party, which was considered to be its public political establishment through which it became active and disseminated its opinions and political stands on national issues. In spite of these attitudes, we were always trying to bring in other national forces to join in the process of armed struggle. However, it appears that the ideological differences and the subjective contradictions nourished by the nationalist and chauvinist trend were much too strong to be overcome in the interest of the nationalist armed struggle. This was especially so as the Movement which was leading the armed struggle was having a difference with the other organizations which had party links with their nationalist organizations. Therefore, the National Front was the only organization among the other political organizations which raised the banner of armed struggle and proceeded with it to the end when evacuation and recognition of the freedom of our people were imposed upon the colonialists. As in any other national liberation movement, the political identity of the National Front was based on liberation from British colonialism.

Every liberation struggle aiming at booting out the foreign colonialists must have its revolutionary driving forces. In our experience, i.e. the experience of our homeland, the National Front was the political organization that embodied the aspirations of the driving forces of the process of national liberation: workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and other social sections opposed to colonialism in the stage of national liberation. Therefore under this aim its struggle was concentrated upon being against the colonialist and sultanic presence and against all lackeys and forces opposed to the people's national liberation.

With the escalated progress of the armed struggle during the stage of national liberation, the National Front was developing not only in its capability to acquire experience and new lessons from the armed struggle process, but was also developing ideologically. This development was bringing it nearer to the transfer from nationalist chauvinist thought which was fundamental to the intellectual education of the Arab Nationalists Movement, the scientific socialist thought and the adoption of the party traditions based on such thought.

Although the Front was living through struggle conditions for national liberation, it witnessed a conflict for defining social and ideological identity. This conflict did not freeze until the forced integration with the Liberation Organization on 13th January, 1966 was declared. The danger posed, made the cohesion of the National Front imperative for the sake of protecting the armed revolution which had begun to be open to plotting from within, at the hands of the opportunist and Sultanic forces, which had come into the leadership of the revolution through a liberation front umbrella. Discontent and dissatisfaction was exhibited toward the National Front, especially after the First Congress held in June, 1965.

The First Congress of the National Front convened in June, 1965. This was a positive aspect of the development taking place within the Front after a year and a half of armed struggle. Thus at this Congress the National Charter, which was the theoretical guide of the Front, was approved. Inspite of the petty bourgeoisie leaning of this Charter in regards to social issues, and the attitude towards the conflict of the present era between the socialist and capitalist systems in the world, it constituted an advanced step of the National Front politically, socially, and ideologically.

The Charter defined the tasks of the armed struggle and the revolution's social program as well as the adherence of the National Front to the theory of scientific socialism. Although such adherence was marked by vagueness and the

petty bourgeoisie leaning, in that stage the ideas of scientific socialism had not been disseminated among the Front's leadership and ranks and ideological education did not rest upon the sources and origins of this theory. There were some leaders who had undertaken self-education and were cognizant of some social experiences. At that time belief in scientific socialism for us was a great victory in the face of tendencies opposed to it and was a political gain for the revolution and proof that there is no such thing as Arab or Islamic or African socialism but only scientific socialism based upon the understanding, analysis, and reality of each society.

Q.2: What are the methods that were employed by the revolution in its various stages to mobilize and organize the masses and attract the clubs and trade unions?

A.2: The national liberation stage is characterized by the adoption of various forms of struggle for achieving national independence. These methods are generally suited to the peculiarities and circumstances of each country. We in Democratic Yemen, did not ignore the rest of political struggle forms that serve the cause of our peoples' national liberation. All political struggle between the people and the colonizer is embodied in various forms, even though we were considering armed struggle to be the most advanced of such forms as far as its effectiveness and influence upon forcing the colonizer to recognize the freedom of the people it concerned. The previous experience of political struggle was the basis from which we started towards armed struggle. The armed struggle also depended upon the peculiarities and circumstances of the country which were prepared to receive such a form of struggle as has been explained before.

We are able to state that armed struggle was a new addition to the forms of patriotic struggle that had preceded it, but it was of greater effectiveness in directing stabs to the colonialist sultanic presence. However this form did not hold back our struggle with chains of stagnation and introversion in one path of struggle alone.

In the early beginnings our concentration was upon making firmer the support of the armed struggle and its spread in what was called the Protectorates and Colony of Aden. We aspired to make it a struggle tradition in the life of the masses of the people. In the first two years of the revolution the most widespread form of national struggle influenced the course of political life and attracted to it all social forces that believed in the national liberation of their country. Besides the armed struggle method we employed other national liberation struggle forms, such as organizing popular demonstrations, workers strikes and raising the

national issue before international conferences like the United Nations, the Arab League, etc. We were able through employment of popular struggle forms to affirm to the English colonialists our ability to disseminate the spirit of national liberation among all masses of the people, organize and mobilize them for effective participation in the armed revolution.

The mass and social organization received much of our attention during the process of organizing and mobilizing the masses in the stage of national liberation. Our attention was greatly concentrated upon the worker's movement, where the National Front was able to extend its influence and attract many trade unions to its ranks. We still remember the role that was played by the six trade unions in the national struggle process and how the opportunist trade unions leadership were exposed before the Yemeni workers. The six trade unions constituted the fundamental workers force of the revolution within the workers movement and consolidated its political status among the ranks of the Yemeni working class. In the same manner that we were able to control the workers movement through the national liberation struggle, we were also able to infiltrate into the mass organizations such as the student unions, womens unions, sports movement, etc. We were able to remove the opportunist and reactionary leaderships and new ones supporting the armed revolution assumed their positions. These organizations played an important role in the national struggle. For example, women used to distribute pamphlets, transmit correspondence and internal directives, and in the countryside they participated by carrying arms and providing the fighters with food. The students also carried out strikes and resisted the colonialist educational policy. However, all of this was linked with a consciousness of the issue, of the peoples' National liberation.

It is necessary to point out here that there was also a development in the methods of armed struggle, whether in the countryside or in the towns. In the beginning our work was based on the principle of hit and disappear, which was a type of work suited for conditions of clandestine action. For this reason the commandos used to wear masks to hide their faces from the eyes of intelligence teams that were surveilling them.

Following consolidation of the status of armed struggle, and after most of the English and Yemeni intelligence agents had been executed, it became possible for us to develop a method of armed struggle. Thus, in the period after having acquired experience, we were able to carry out operations that depended upon a large number of fighters. At this point we took up positions in more than one site and at the same time. Similarly the street war operations against the British tanks and infantry and the occupation of Crater for a period of 16 days displayed the ad-

vanced degree to which armed struggle had reached. Following the weakening of the position of the British forces in the area and broadening of the armed action, it became possible for us to transfer another stage which we may call the decisive stage in our national liberation struggle. By this I mean the moment the armed struggle was transformed into a peoples' liberation war, the masses were armed and driven to bring about the downfall of the sultanic and sheikdom systems, consecutively, and in particular after the occupation of Crater in June, 1967.

Q.3: How did you face the 13th January, 1966 decision for continuing the National Front's armed struggle and how did you overcome the civil war? Why did the Army take your side in the last moments?

A.3: In our estimation the 13th January decision under which the forced integration between the Liberation Organization and the National Front was announced and the formation of the Liberation Front came at a time when the armed struggle had become a decisive factor in the process of national liberation. Until the end of 1965, the National Front was the only revolutionary force embodying the aspirations of the people in Liberation. Its Liberation struggle had nearly forced the British colonialists to recognize the National Front as the only national force whom the issue of National Independence could be discussed. However, a thing happened which was vividly a part of a plan to deal a blow to the revolution, or contain it from within.

Those who had rejected the method of armed struggle in the beginning and took up an attitude of opposition and condemnation thereof in their political statements suddenly declared their belief in the armed struggle. We found in the middle of 1965 that the People's Socialist Party and the South Arabian League declared this belief and formed the Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South Yemen. Then, some sultans who had 'withdrawn' from the London Constitutional Conference joined the Organization after having sought asylum in Cairo, and then declared their belief in the armed struggle, as a means of forcing Britain to grant independence to the country, and leave the people in South Yemen to determine their destiny.

When we estimate the effect left by the January 1966 decision upon the national liberation struggle, we find that it constituted a fetter placed upon the development of the armed struggle. Thus, during the period from January until October of the same year, the number of commando and military operations against the British forces decreased, as a result of the fetters placed by Egyptian intelligence upon supplying the National Front with arms. The matter reached the point

of withdrawing the heavy weaponry from the hands of the Liberation Army. During this period, Liberation Front did not have its fighting army or commandos. The operations that were carried out by the National Front were attributed to the Liberation Front, because the information organs in Taiz, Sana'a and Cairo had become pulpits of the Liberation Front. As for us, we did not possess any information media other than pamphlets that contained information of the commando activity, and our political stands as regards various issues. Even in this area, the Liberation Front used to issue pamphlets and attribute to itself military operations which, in fact, had not taken place. This, of course, created concern and confusion among the masses.

The armed struggle did not regain its status until after the National Front had announced its secession from the Liberation Front in November, 1966, following the Third Congress of the Front. So, after our withdrawal and our carrying out some robbery operations against some banks and foreign enterprises, and our imposing a high tax upon the salaries of the Front's members, it became possible for us to have dealings with the arms dealer, and receive what we wanted of weapons for proceeding with armed action in the countryside and towns. The fall of some areas also made it possible for us to gain control over the arms stores of the sultans. This situation created by the secession of the National Front from the Liberation Front and our independent activity made possible the rejuvenation of the armed struggle, the regaining of its strength and status in a greater manner than before.

In spite of the forced January decision which was adopted behind the back of the National Front, and without its being informed or consulted, we exerted efforts for the establishment of a Front on democratic fundamentals that would ensure the progress of the armed struggle to move ahead on the path of National Liberation. The Second Congress of the National Front was convened at Jiblah after the January decision. At this Congress, the report of the General command on the new developments and the Front's stand vis a vis the integration issue was discussed. The Congress accepted remaining within the framework of the Liberation Front with the clarification of our view on the fundamentals on which the Allied Front should be established and our rejection of accepting the Sultans in national work. This was conveyed to the Egyptian Command and Abdul Nasser.

The Third Congress was convened in November 1966 in Hamer, Qa'ataba region. It came immediately after the anxiety that had spread among the ranks of the National Front had come out of fear for the future of liberation struggle. The

ranks of the National Front had come out in popular wide scale demonstrations in October of the same year. They demanded secession from the Liberation Front, and reversion of independent struggle. The experience undergone with the Liberation Front had deeprooted the conviction of the necessity for withdrawing from its framework. Thus, the Third Congress came out with the withdrawal resolution, and continuation of the armed struggle in an independent manner.

It was natural that the withdrawal resolution should signify that there existed a difference with the Liberation Front. It was also natural that this difference should be transferred to the struggle arena itself, and should be transformed into animosity, during which arms would be used. This is exactly what did happen after that. Inspite of its withdrawal, the National Front hoped that the armed struggle against the British forces would be intensified, and during the course of such struggle the unity between the fighters, whether from the National Front or the Liberation Front, would be consolidated. However, the opportunist leadership of the Liberation Front was driving the fighters from the Liberation Front to commit inconveniences, and provocations against the fighters, and leaders, of the National Front, in the outset and later to perpetrate attempts at assassination. The National Front practised every restraint,

and carried out contacts and dialogue with some of the fighting ranks of the Liberation Front. It aimed at spoiling the opportunity for all those who aspired to have the armed struggle diverged from its tasks. Indeed, some type of common work and co-ordination was achieved with such ranks. However, it appears that the tendency to drive towards a clash was preponderant on the mentality of the Liberation Front leadership.

During the period of the National Front occupation of Crater town, following the setback of June 1967, elements from the Liberation Front assassinated Abdunabi Madram, one of the leaders of commando activity of our Front, and attempted to assassinate others. In this manner the civil war broke out in July of the same year, many fighters and innocent citizens fell victims to this war. This war ended with a cessation agreement between the two parties. The spirit of animosity and revenge remained, and the civilian and military leaders of the National Front continued to be victims of assassination attempts. At that time attempts were being made in Cairo to reach a certain formula of national unity with a view to negotiate with Britain on national independence. The Arab League mediated in this matter. However, what was occurring in Cairo was different from what was occurring in the domestic scene. Thus, early



Salem Rubaya' Ali, Assistant to the Secretary General of the Front, meeting with a local peasant committee.

in September a group of Liberation Front elements threw a hand grenade, from a small car at some of the military leaders of the National Front. This occurred at the Command headquarters in the Hashimi district of Shaikh Uthman, and resulted in injury, and death for some.

As a result of this hand grenade incident the second civil war broke out, mainly in the First Governorate and the Lahej area. As for the remaining areas, the Liberation Front hardly had any influence there. This civil war was decided in favor of the National Front. Troops from the Liberation Army came in from the countryside to join the civil war.

With the new developments and the growth of the National Front's popularity, British colonialism realized that the balance of power was in favor of the National Front. The sultanic system and the fake Federation State were in an unenviable position. Many areas began to fall into the hands of the National Front authority, and the struggle with the Liberation Front had been determined in favor of the National Front.

When Britain realized the situation favored the National Front it tried to play its last card: the army. They expressed their readiness to hand over complete power to the army. Britain was attempting to determine whether the army, if in power, could be effective. The National Front was in a position that qualified it to face up to the army as its organizational influence had extended to the ranks of the soldiers and officers.

When the National Front realized the new colonialist plan, it issued a political statement warning the army against the colonialist plan. The Army command rejected the question of receiving power.

The Army command had no choice but to side with the National Front when it saw the power and popularity of the National Front. To take another position would have proved its treachery to the homeland. Britain had thought that by the army not taking the side of the National Front it would prove to be their last landmine and enable them to detonate the path of national independence and place the country in the clutches of neo-colonialism. However, the events after the 20th March coup and the 14th May movement proved the status that Britain wanted the army to enjoy. Yet the National Front was greater than to allow all of that to supersede its national struggle.

Q.4: The First Congress of the National Front held an outstanding position in spite of its petty bourgeoisie formula in defining the revolution's political and military course. What

was the influence of the Second and Third Congresses on clarification and development of this course? How did the fundamentals of the struggle between the Right and the Left in the Front become clarified through the armed struggle?

A.4: The First Congress of the National Front which was convened in June, 1965 at Taiz city represents a positive turn in the life of the national struggle. It had been convened after a year and a half of armed struggle experience. During this period the National Front had gained considerable experience from the lessons of the national struggle and witnessed development in ideological awareness which was bringing it nearer to belief in scientific socialism. However this belief was shrouded in mistiness and zeal, which is a characteristic that stayed with bourgeoisie organizations in the Arab homeland. We know that the ideas that the Arab Nationalists Movement held were drawn from a chauvinist leading of the nationalist culture. As for the culture that draws its origins from the scientific socialism theory, it was not a tradition in the internal cultural life of the National Front members. The link with ideas of socialism remained dependent upon personal efforts of each individual member. By virtue of the spread of such ideas on many different levels among the members, a progressive stream began to grow that disagreed and debated with the traditional stream that wanted to cling to the values, traditions, and ideas inculcated by the Arab Nationalists Movement.

The First Congress approved the Charter of National Work and included an evaluation of the peoples' national struggle since the feet of the colonizers stepped onto Aden and formulated the economic and social programme which would be undertaken by the Front through struggle for its implementation after national liberation. It also declared belief of the National Front in scientific socialism. Generally and inspite of the fact that the First Congress, when formulating the revolution's political and intellectual course, was nearly overcome by the spirit of the petty bourgeoisie its political and intellectual results -if considered in light of the circumstances of the reality of that stage- can be considered progressive. Many of the petty bourgeoisie political forces, whether in Yemen or abroad, who had relations with the Yemeni national movement did not hide their dissatisfaction with this Congress and used to hint at their discontent with the National Charter.

That was the external form of the National Front on the political struggle and ideological plane. As to the internal form, it used to ferment with debate and ideological conflict between the progressive and traditional streams over the ideological and class content of the

revolution. This debate was pulsating through the course of the armed struggle towards the decision in favor of deeprooting the ideological and class structure of the revolution in view of the theory of scientific socialism.

The 13th January decision put an end to the internal debate of the National Front. From January, 1966 until November, 1967 the continuation of the debate and the issue of the determination were not among the tasks posed before the National Front. The task that was posed was to defend itself and the cause of the armed struggle against the new dangers that were born out of the forced integration and the establishment of the Liberation Front. Therefore, the debate and conflict were frozen and did not reappear in an acute manner to the surface of the internal life of the National Front except after independence and particularly during the Fourth Congress convened at Zingibar in March, 1968.

Naturally all of this does not mean that the intellectual debate within the ranks of the Front was frozen in an absolute manner. The development of intellectual awareness among the members and their becoming acquainted with some of the socialist experiences and the origins of scientific socialism created democratic debate that aimed at development of experience and ensured that it dawned upon the vistas of the world revolutionary movement.

As for the Second and Third Congresses, they did not crystallize the ideological line of the revolution as they were linked to discussion of the National Front's attitude toward the cause of revolution within the framework of the Liberation Front. The period of their convening was one during which the revolution witnessed a crisis and a selection between staying within the Liberation Front or withdrawal from its framework.

During the Second Congress at Jibla, following the forced integration, the issue placed before the Congress was whether the National Front accepted or rejected integration. The circumstances then prevailing and the pressure exerted compelled it to remain and we accepted integration on conditions that we raised to the Egyptian Command and we refused to have the sultans within the Front.

The Third Congress convened at Hamer in the Qa'ataba region. It was convened following the determination of the ranks of the National Front upon the necessity of withdrawal, which was expressed by the popular demonstrations in October, 1966 on the occasion of the Third Anniversary of the Revolution.

The conflict between the progressive and rightist stream did not reach its climax within the

National Front except during the Fourth Congress convened in March, 1968. During this period the National Front had successfully accomplished the national liberation tasks by expelling the colonialists and the sultans from the country. Every national liberation movement in the world has its national struggle established during the stage of national liberation by all of the social forces opposed to the colonizer. At this stage sections of the national capitalists and feudalists may enrol. But after achieving national independence they clash with the task of resolving the social contradictions and the existing exploitation and achieving the aims for which the workers struggled during the stage of national liberation.

In Democratic Yemen, the task posed before the National Front in the stage of armed struggle was a task linked to the essence of national liberation. When this task had been accomplished successfully, the social question and the need to resolve it in a manner harmonious with the social aspirations for which the workers of our country struggled within the ranks of the revolution, arise. The issue of deciding the ideological attitude of the revolution in favor of the revolution's workers, and complete alignment with the international revolutionary movement with its three forces topped by the socialist camp, also arised.

Over these issues the struggle between the two streams took place during the Fourth Congress in a sharp and violent manner. The progressive stream was able to put forward issues and programmes linked to the essence of the tasks of the stage following national liberation. The resolutions and the political statements were an affirmation of the strength and growth of the progressive stream.

Because of the victory gained by the progressive group at the Fourth Congress, the rightists and the reserve forces of neo-colonialism in the army and the security forces resorted to the 20th March coup a few days after the end of the Congress. However, this coup failed and proved the bankruptcy of the Rightists in relation to the ranks of the National Front and the masses.

Q.5: Much has been written about the experience of the Sana'a seige as an example of urban warfare. The urban warfare in Aden is still in dire need of formulation and presentation as a document in the hands of the revolutionary forces. What were the characteristics of this experience? How were you able to transfer fighting to Aden and occupy the Crater district on the 20th June, 1967 and attack the Legislative Council? Is it possible to present other examples of operations within Aden and how did you analyze the issue of supply, camouflage, arms, and communications?

A.5. There are many rich lessons to be learned from the experience of urban warfare during the Yemeni national struggle from the moment the 26th September and 14th October revolutions were launched, and about which nothing or very little has been written.

As to the characteristics of urban warfare in Aden and Sana'a or regarding the characteristics of armed struggle in both parts of the region, we find that the armed struggle in the northern part of the homeland was linked to the cause of defending the 26th September revolution and republic. The experience of the war in Sana'a was linked with the popular armed defense of Sana'a in the face of the invasion launched by thousands of Yemeni royalist mercenaries and European mercenaries who had been hired by Saudi reaction to train and organize the mercenary forces.

On the other hand we find the experience of armed struggle in the southern part of the region linked to the struggle for liberation of the whole country from the domination of the colonialists and their sultanic lackeys. We adopted the path of armed struggle and national liberation throughout four years. These years were characterized by the rapid growth and continuous development of the armed struggle. The most outstanding aspect that can be recorded from the armed struggle experience is that we began with nothing. The Arab Nationalists Movement was a political organization and had no knowledge of training in the use of arms although it had become cognizant of the armed struggle experiences of Cuba, Algiers, China, and the partisans' war after the Great October Socialist Revolution. This concept had begun to invade the minds of several members of the Movement before the armed uprising of Radfan. I remember that we used to organize weekly trips to the countryside areas for some members to train in the use of firearms so as to be the nucleus of commando activity in Aden. For the first time, the touching of weapons and the firing of bullets produced the spirit of adventure and the love to carry arms among these elements, which affirmed their readiness to proceed ahead with the national liberation. The love of the homeland and its liberation was making them strongly attached to the rifle.

Following the armed uprising in Radfan and following adoption of the decision to practice armed struggle as a path leading to achievement of national liberation, we had to broaden the training of the military cadres and soundly prepare them. Owing to the clandestine nature of the work we used to select the most firm and the most mature in political awareness and those who had a long organizational experience.

When we had completed equipping of the commando elements, we began to think about transferring

commando activity to the towns and, in particular, Aden colony. The armed struggle in the countryside had gone a long way in arousing the concern of the English colonialists as the geographical nature of the mountainous areas such as Dhala, Mukairas, Yafa, etc. made suitable the conditions for armed struggle. This allowed us to expand to the towns. Our estimation was that if commando activity could be transferred to the colony of Aden it would change the balance of power in favor of the revolution. Britain felt prepared to oppose the armed struggle in the countryside for years as long as it did not spread to Aden proper. Aden was akin to the Red Sea mermaid devoted to calm and peace. Its colonialist owners did not want it subjected to the scratches of struggle, let alone being subjected to the scream of bullets and explosions at the hands of 'terrorists'. There was the aspect that the inhabitants had never been accustomed to hearing explosions in their lives.

On the other hand our commandos had no tangible experience of carrying out operations against enemy targets directly. Therefore, the beginning was difficult for them as there was the belief that the British intelligence was observing them and that they would be immediately exposed. In fact they needed the first shake before becoming accustomed to carrying out operations against the enemy directly. This feeling can be traced to the geographical nature of Aden. It is next to a small peninsula or a bottle-neck which can be easily closed and controlled by a limited force and in a matter of a few minutes. To this may be added the fact that the commando elements had not been trained or studied guerilla warfare in towns. However, they were well acquainted with Aden and its streets, lanes, and mountains.

Inspite of the difficulties we were concerned with transferring the armed struggle to Aden. We prepared everything and created the conditions for unleashing it. Inspite of the British military perimeter around Aden and inspite of the check-points and tens of miles of barbed wire, we were able to bring into Aden weapons by motor car ventures and on camel back transporting grass, fodder, and vegetables from the farms to Aden markets. In the town itself we used to manufacture plastic bombs from chemical materials.

Early in 1964 and only some months after the beginning of the revolution, commando activity was transferred to Aden colony where the commandos carried out a series of operations involving throwing hand grenades into the homes of British officers and their clubs and firing bazooka rockets. These operations resulted in the killing and injury of tens of British officers and soldiers.

During these operations the commandos learned

great lessons that were of benefit to them in subsequent operations and disclosed to them the weak points of the British military system in the Colony. We discovered that Aden was not the bottle-neck that could be closed by the British in a matter of minutes after hearing an explosion. It happened once that a small group of commandos were ordered to fire at the military airport in Khormaksar at night. When they fired the first shell, the darkness was lit up by the glare of the fired rocket and a few civilian cars and some pedestrians were passing them at a short distance. They thought that the people had seen them and recognized them, and they therefore did not complete firing the remaining rockets and quickly returned by car in great anxiety. When they reached the agreed re-grouping point, it was discovered that they had forgotten one rocket at the operation site. They were ordered to return and bring back the rocket. Two of the commandos went back and they were imagining that they would fall into the hands of the British soldiers. When they did reach the operation site they found no one there. They commenced searching for the rocket for some time until it was found. This operation consolidated the commandos' determination to proceed with military operations and affirmed to them that the colonialist enemy was not as frightening as they had believed.

Thereafter operations continued with strength and audacity. A group of commandos and rockets were transported to the Tawahi area where the Middle East military command was. They climbed a hill overlooking the British broadcasting station, occupied the hill and fired bazooka shells causing damage and killing a number of British soldiers guarding the broadcasting station and then worked their way back on foot through the hills to the town.

Naturally, in the beginning of the commando activity in Aden and other towns we had to resort to various methods of disguise such as masks, changing of car numbers, and impersonating officials and officers by donning the official costumes. For example, we would prepare the persons who would carry out the operation, prepare the cars with false numbers, determine the regrouping point after the operation had been executed and then we would carry out the operation, hide everything, return the cars with their correct numbers and walk among the people in a normal manner ascertaining the reactions among them towards the operation. I remember that after the first blow dealt to us when the colonialist authorities detained some active commando elements, we thought of directing a blow at the local and British intelligence officers equally, for if we left them alone without retaliation they would attempt harder in the future to put an end to commando activity. In the beginning we addressed warnings to the local officers against harrassing the commandos, but it appears they did not bother about

that very much. We planned to assassinate one of their outstanding men -the lackey Fadhl Khalil. The place where the operation would be carried out was a busy one situated in the middle of Cra-ter market and was the normal rendezvous of the lackey.

According to the plan, the car with false numbers carrying the masked commandos arrived near him and machine gunned him. The people were in confusion and clamour with curiosity to know the faces of the commandos. To veil the retreat, a smoke bomb was fired which compelled the people to flee or hit the ground believing that it was a hand grenade. Thereafter assassination operations directed against the intelligence officers followed one after the other. Our machine guns hunted down senior intelligence officers and British officials such as Mr. Barry, Charles-the Legislative Council Speaker, Chambers and others. In fact, the fall of tens of intelligence officers removed the obstacles that could have foiled the development of commando activity. It also granted the possibility for forging ahead.

Until the end of 1965, nearly everything had fallen from the control of the colonialist authorities and they were unable to direct their suppressive blows against commando activity. London was disturbed about the situation in Aden and aired a colonialist opinion about intensifying the British attitude towards the armed struggle. It reached the extent of implementing the death sentence against some prisoners who were leaders of commando activity. This was countered by another opinion that such action would only increase the intensity of the peoples' national struggle.

It can be said that the armed struggle during this period was characterized by clandestine activity conditions. The success, steadfastness, and development of commando activity was paving the way for the stage of direct confrontation with the occupation troops. However, the conditions arising out of the establishment of the Liberation Front in the beginning of 1966 obstructed for a time the transformation of commando activity into direct confrontation with the colonialist enemy.

Beginning with the close of 1966 and throughout 1967 commando activity was changed from clandestine operations into direct confrontation. The military operations were characterized by open movement, taking of positions on rooftops, conduct of street battles against the infantry and patrols and the use of mortar and bazooka shells. Against this, we find the occupation troops moving from positions of attack to defensive positions in their camps and residences of British officers in the European localities such as Khormaksar, Tawahi, Maalla, Buraika, and Cra-ter.

However, even the moving of British troops to defensive positions did not obstruct the armed revolution but provided it with the opportunity to move to a new phase of activity, i.e. assault instead of the operations carried out on the basis of attack and rapid disappearance.

There was intensified guarding of residential areas where the families of officers and soldiers were living yet concrete barriers were erected in lanes and street entrances out of fear of commando ambushes. We resorted to the use of the mortar and bazooka guns fired from a distance, resulting in the success of a number of operations which in fact compelled the British in the end to evacuate all of their families.

In a number of operations we used heavy mortar guns against British military positions in Tawahi and Khormaksar. In one of these operations we attacked the military airport with concentrated heavy mortar fire and hit some of the airplanes grounded there. After completion of the operation the commandos returned to the headquarters while helicopters were pursuing them. They met these with machine gun fire throughout the retreat until they entered the streets. One helicopter continued the pursuit firing at them from a low height but even then the commandos were able to disappear and hide the heavy mortar gun. This battle was a violent one indeed.

In another operation we were able to bring in a heavy mortar gun into the Rodha area of Maalla and from a small hill bombarded the Middle East Command in Tawahi area with several shells and withdrew safely. A few minutes later the entrance to Tawahi had been closed by British troops. However they were unable to find anything.

Among the most violent military battles were the open and direct street battles between our commandos and the British troops during the visit of the UN Fact-finding Mission in April, 1967. These battles continued in the streets and districts, throughout the stay of the Mission in Aden, in a continuous manner. Our weapons during these battles were light machine guns, hand grenades, and bazooka guns while the British troops used aircraft, tanks, and infantry. Aden was in fact transformed into an arena of bloody battles between the revolution and the colonialist troops.

Those are some of the prominent military operations during the life of the revolution and the urban warfare experience. It can be said that this experience was crowned with the occupation of Crater on 20th June, 1967 for more than a fortnight which was a turning point in the armed struggle with the mobilization of the masses effecting the downfall of area after area from the hands of the sultans and colonialists.

Following the military setback sustained by the

Arab armies in June, 1967, resulting in the occupation of many Arab lands by Israel, British colonialism thought that it was in a position enabling it to deal a final blow against the revolution. This was especially so as the psychological reactions of the popular masses to the setback had left a negative, submissive imprint. Therefore, British colonialism attempted the elimination of some elements that supported the Front in the Army and the police, so as to create a clash with the commandos on 20th June, 1967. This in fact led to a solidarity between the security forces and the commandos and resulted in an armed uprising in Crater town. Armories were seized and weapons distributed among the commandos and the Front's supporters, and several clashes with the British troops in the town took place resulting in the killing of several of them while the others fled to outside the town. Several vehicles were destroyed and some helicopters shot down.

When complete control of the town had been achieved the Front undertook the responsibility of its administration. Its troops entrenched themselves on hill tops and entrances into the town. The battles took their course between our troops and the British troops which were stationed at various points in Maalla and the cross roads.

Throughout the period of the fall of Crater town, the British troops used various military methods to regain the town. It resorted to besieging the town to prevent any arms supplies from reaching the commandos. However, the siege failed and our troops continued to defend the town throughout the period of British control affirming their determination to achieve national independence at any price.

In the end, the British resorted to flying in its troops to regain control of the town. They entered the town from the Marine Drive facing battles during the process. The British troops used to fly the British flag in each street they occupied. Naturally, their might exceeded ours and it was not in our plan to continue controlling the town as we had achieved the political victory which we wanted.

PART TWO

INDEPENDENCE AND THE IMPASSE FACING THE RIGHT TREND

Q.6: The Fourth Congress of the National Front confirmed the existence of two streams, two lines, in the Organization and the Authority as regards the state, the Revolution, and the establishment of the progressive national authority. With the failure of the 20th March coup movement, the position of the Left has been consolidated and the 14th May movement has become the fundamental avenue to the Rectification Movement of 22nd June, 1969.

- a) How was the conflict within the Organization and the state pursued to reach the Rectification Movement; what are the details of this movement?
- b) What is the attitude of the other national forces regarding this conflict?

A.6: After only three months of national independence, the National Front of Political Organization had to re-evaluate and determine the correct perspective of the revolution. This was so because the new task of the revolution, although being an extension of the tasks of national liberation, were different as they were tasks that required that the National Front formulate an attitude towards the social issue, and the existing class contradictions based on injustice and exploitation by a few people of a broad base of workers.

We were required to struggle for the completion of national liberation and take a step forward on the path of liberating the national economy from the domination of the foreign firms and the control of feudalism. Over and above all, we were required to define the attitude towards the struggle of the current epoch in the world, between the socialist and capitalist systems, by adopting a position aligned to the forces of liberation and progress in the world.

Indeed the Fourth Congress was a congress that disclosed the existence of two contradictory trends in the understanding of the revolution following the achievement of national independence: a Rightist trend that saw the revolution as a mere flag and anthem and another trend that saw in the revolution progress towards new transformations in favor of the Yemeni workers and the prosperity of their lives. The Fourth Congress which was convened in March, 1968 came out with positive results in favor of the progressive trend and the development of the revolution. This was evident in the issues presented pertaining to the tasks of the Authority and in the Political Statement issued by the Congress as well as the resolutions that were adopted.

However, it appears that the results of the Con-

gress did not satisfy the political ambition of the Rightist trend which felt that the power of the progressive trend would undermine the traditional support which was being advanced to empty every possibility of the forward development of the revolution. Thus it did not find before it any chance except to move neo-colonialist reserves into the army and have the police confront the progressive trend and incite the commands of these two establishments to carry out the 20th March, 1968 coup only a few days after the end of the Congress. All the progressive elements within the political organization were arrested.

However, the firm status of the Leftist wing within the organization and among the popular circles foiled the coup, inspite of the attempts made by the American ambassador through his contacts with the coup's leaders for its success. However, even though the coup failed, it confirmed the danger posed by this trend, and its being concentrated in the military establishments and the State organs, and the need for struggle to destroy it so that the revolution may continue with its bright features.

Following the affirmation of the Rightist feature of these commands in the Authority and the political organization, the progressive wing - following the pursuit and harassments confronted after the coup - attempted to take a step to confront the terror of the Right and their deviation from the revolution's line. In this way did it undertake the 14th May armed uprising in 1968 which represented a violent conflict for the elimination of the Rightist forces and their position.

Owing to the immaturity of the subjective and objective conditions for the success of the 14th May armed movement, the progressive wing resorted to the re-organization of its forces within the political organization, awaiting the suitable moment. It began to become active and adopted the correct tactics. Naturally many of the leading elements of the progressive wing had faced difficult circumstances following the 14th May movement and resorted to hiding and practising clandestine activity within the area while others had to disappear in the north.

The rightist wing and its policies became increasingly isolated domestically and it was unable to move a step forward, while the progressive wing was consolidating its positions day after day. When the rightist leadership in the organization and the authority comprehended their political bankruptcy in the state and the party, they were forced to accept the return of the progressive elements into the area.

The return of the progressive elements to practice their responsibilities consolidated the position of the progressive wing. There was the pos-

sibility of rectifying the course of the revolution from within in a democratic manner. During this period, the influence of the progressive wing was strong even among the armed forces and the police and particularly among the soldiers and junior officers and it was in a position enabling it even to carry out a military coup. However, we refused to traverse this path because we believed that the political organization, as leader of the revolution, was required to rectify the course of the revolution. We also wanted to establish democratic traditions within the organization affirming the leading and guiding role as regards the other military and civil establishments of the State.

The rightist wing attempted to taint the authority with individual characteristics and the centralization of power in the hands of the President of the Republic. This became evident from the draft constitution which was submitted to the General Command of the Political Organization and which wanted to grant the President of the Republic the right to declare war and appoint ministers, commanders and officials. As the political organization depended upon the spirit of collective leadership, the majority of the General Command rejected the centralization of power in the hands of the President of the Republic and considered it a violation of the party work traditions within the Front. Then came the blatant violation of this principle by the President of the Republic when he dismissed the Minister of Interior and refused the discussion thereof by the Executive Committee and the General Command. We tried to insist upon respect for the organization's General Command and the non-trespassing of its powers on the basis that it was the political authority of the country and enjoys the right of appointing and dismissing.

In a meeting of the General Command to consider the violation by the President of the Republic of the principle of collective leadership and the importance of respecting the political authority of the General Command, the President of the Republic and elements of the rightist wing within the General Command took an attitude that insisted upon the absolute right of the President of the Republic in exercising his individual powers in the Executive. When the majority of the General Command rejected the individual despotism which the President of the Republic wanted to practice, through the decisions that were adopted by him without the knowledge of the General Command, he threatened to resign from his post.

The General Command accepted this resignation and during the meetings of the General Command, the broadcasting station announced that the President of the Republic would deliver an important statement to the people. We did realize that this was a type of deception to incite the rightist forces within the organization and the armed

forces and the police and State organs against the progressive wing and throw the country into the dilemma of chaos and terror.

Immediately on 22nd June the progressive wing moved and gained control of the broadcasting station and broadcasted the statement issued by the General Command regarding the resignation of the President of the Republic from all of his posts and the constitution of a Presidential Council and a new Council of Ministers as an executive authority in which the principle of collective leadership would be embodied. The statement defined the truth of the conflict between the two wings within the revolution and defined the domestic and foreign line of the National Front Political Organization.

Naturally, after the announcing of the General Command's political statement the rightist wing tried to move some military units from the rural areas to march upon the capital to oppose and foil the General Command's step. However, this attempt failed and leading elements went to all camps to meet the members of the organization and the soldiers to explain the truth of the situation. On the other hand, the other national democratic forces took a supporting stand as regards the 22nd June Rectification Movement. This attitude was consequential to the Rightist authority having practised terror and oppression against these forces to the same extent that it had practised against the progressive wing within the National Front. In fact, the 22nd June Rectification Movement opened up broad avenues for the creation of a new atmosphere to bring about a democratic relationship with the other sections of national democratic action. This relationship was embodied in the dialogue that took place following the Rectification Movement for the sake of the unity of national democratic action as a step towards the establishment of a Vanguard Party. This issue we still consider and have taken on its path several steps of a positive nature which will in the future consolidate the revolutionary process in our country.

PART THREE

TOWARDS ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE TASKS OF THE STAGE OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Q.7: The public sector in the developing state of a non-capitalist course of development holds the role of leader and guide of the national economy. The public sector was created on 27th November, 1969 after the nationalization decrees and as a result of the state monopolized home and foreign trade and controlled banks, companies, and some factories. The role of the public sector in industry and agriculture has been consolidated by virtue of the three year Development Plan towards attaining regulation of the sale of consumer commodities in retail shops and the sale of fruits and vegetables at fixed prices.

- a) What are the results of this experience?
- b) What are the profits of the public sector?
- c) What is its role in the Five year Development Plan?
- d) How do you resolve the cadre issue therein?

A.7: Following the 22nd June Rectification Movement and the removal of the rightist forces within the Organization and the State, it became possible for the revolution to continue with its tasks which are considered to be an extension of the tasks of national liberation. Among the outstanding tasks posed before the National Front Political Organization for the completion of the country's national independence was the liberation of the national economy from both types of exploitation under which the workers and poor peasants of our country groan. By these two forms we mean the exploitation practised by the foreign firms in the towns and the exploitation practised by the feudalists and big land owners in the countryside.

The nationalization resolutions were issued in November, 1969 after several months had passed since the Rectification Movement. The nationalized companies formed the nucleus of the national public sector. With the establishment of the public sector, several companies, organizations, and banks became the property of the state. Besides a certain proportion of home and foreign trade also fell under the direct supervision of the state represented by the public sector.

The process was not restricted to the liberation of the national economy from the domination of the foreign monopolist companies as the revolution, for the first time in its economic life, commenced upon the planning and programming of the national economy. The three year Plan was formulated for the spheres of agriculture and industry and many vital projects directly connected with the material and spiritual life of the people were established. When we evaluate the three year Plan we find that a large proportion of suc-

cess was attained, especially in the sphere of agriculture where success reached 100%. However, this does not mean that we did not confront difficulties. We faced difficulties in executing some projects within the defined time. This was consequential because these projects were dependent upon credits from foreign countries and the role of the private sector executed only some of its projects within the plan. Generally the plan broadened the base of the public sector.

The three-year Plan provided us with lessons and experiences which were of benefit to us in preparing the five-year Plan whose execution commenced this year. We believe that this second plan in the economic life of our country will effect a great uplift in the life of the masses and establish primary foundations of the developed national economy.

The public sector plays an outstanding role in the process of economic development of our country. Thus, the profits that used to fill the coffers of the monopolist companies abroad are now employed in the service of the country's economic development. During the past few years of the life of the public sector, it has contributed with a proportion of the profits gained for consolidation of projects of economic development.

The experience of the public sector has affirmed the ability of the liberation system in Democratic Yemen to direct and guide the national economy on the path of development and raise the material living standards of the people. We naturally faced great difficulty in the beginning as regards finding the qualified cadres for directing and guiding the nationalized utilities as it is well known that the administration had rested upon foreign cadres while the national cadres held minor and non-fundamental posts.

However, the determination of the revolution to liberate the national economy made it take the step and depend on national elements and some cadres from the fraternal countries for the administration of the public sector. During the past years our cadres have gained experience and competence in work and proved their ability to direct the public sector.

For the development and raising of the standard of the national cadres study courses are organized during which the cadres receive lectures and lessons in administration of organizations and production branches. This is in addition to the cadres that study in fraternal and friendly countries. Together with the process of preparation of the qualified cadres, the School of Socialist Sciences plays an important role in the dissemination of ideas of scientific socialism among the cadres of the State and the public sector. This is so because we want to create a na-

tional cadre conscious of the cause of construction of the national economy and at the same time linked with the ideological stand of our revolution since the connection between these two attitudes is the correct guarantee for making our cadres struggle for development of the people's economy.

In the field of organizing the domestic market and sale of consumer commodities the revolution took positive steps in this regard. Retail sale shops have been opened in the various provinces and they today play a vital role in making available the commodity to the citizen at a proper price. Similarly, the organization of the sale of fruits, vegetables, and fish and the linking thereof to the production of co-operative societies has granted the Yemeni citizen the opportunity to obtain his requirements at proper prices. Naturally this type of organization was confronted with some difficulties in the beginning such as the long wait at stalls. However, with the spread of sale centers and the adoption of organization methods in work we have been able to alleviate these difficulties.

The revolution in organizing the domestic market aimed fundamentally at overcoming exploitation of prices and the chaotic marketing from which the masses had suffered before at the hands of the exploiting merchants. In fact, during the past five years new economic forms have been established that express the interests of the productive revolutionary forces in our country made up of workers, co-operative peasants, and other toilers. Thus the public sector, state farms, and co-operatives of various types, forms and social aims have become the expression of the growing production method of the productive revolutionary forces in Democratic Yemen and embody the revolutionary uplift of these forces for the sake of creating a new life.

The next five years will witness a development in the economic life of our country and will change the old features of the national economy which were inherited from the colonialist domination, i.e. the feature of a parasitic services economy. The five year Plan aims at changing the current features of the national economy and establishing it on a developed foundation in industry, agriculture, and services. As a country whose economy is to a great extent based on agriculture, it is imperative that concentration during the Plan's years should be placed on the development and uplift of agriculture and particularly in productive agriculture linked to industry such as cotton, and seed oil plants. The cultivated area will increase and modern scientific and technological methods will be introduced. There is great interest in cultivating crops that are linked to the livelihood of people such as cereals of various types.

On the industrial side many industrial projects

will be executed which will consolidate the foundation of the national economy and create the conditions for transforming Democratic Yemen into a society establishing its life on industrial production. We attach great importance to industry which will be set up in the forthcoming years because it, in addition to satisfying the needs of the masses in the form of commodities linked to their livelihood, will broaden the Yemeni working class base to which we owe allegiance and to whose theory (scientific socialism) we adhere.

Besides concentration upon agriculture and industry in the plan, the National Front Political Organization accords great importance to the extraction and manufacture of mineral resources especially oil resources. As the preliminary studies affirm, our country has rich mineral deposits and should the resources be available for their exploitation, these will play an important role in the economic uplift of our people.

If we aim, by achieving the five-year plan, at taking a step forward on the path of development and uplift of the people's life, we also aim at raising the level of the cultural development of the workers and toilers. The National Front Political Organization will concentrate its efforts in the forthcoming period upon eradication of illiteracy and act for the propagation of compulsory education particularly in the primary and preparatory stages and the dissemination of the ideas of scientific socialism among the people. In brief, the Political Organization aims at accomplishing the tasks of the cultural revolution of the people and bury under the ground the last fortress of illiteracy in the country.

Q.8: With the formation of the People's Supreme Assembly in which the productive forces (workers and peasants) have participated with great effectiveness, together with sections of the nationalist action and the trade sectors, you have laid the first brick for the consolidation of the people's power. Because the Assembly is the legislative authority of the country it is in need of lower bodies at the level of the Republic. As you are the Chairman of the Assembly, do you intend to form People's Councils in the Provinces and the Districts?

A.8: Following the 22nd June Movement, it was imperative that we take steps toward enabling the masses to practise their democratic rights in the legislative authority. Thus, the constitution of the People's Supreme Assembly was an embodiment of the power of the workers and their allies - the national peasants and all toilers. The sections of the national democratic action have participated in the People's Supreme Assembly, thereby symbolizing the unity

of the struggle of all democratic and progressive Yemeni. We believe that the participation of the progressive sections in the Assembly and in the government was a positive step in consolidating the cohesion of the home front and was consequential to the principled conviction in the importance of the national democratic alliance in favor of the revolutionary process.

For the first time women participated in the People's Supreme Assembly. In our opinion their participation affirms the principled stand of the National Front Political Organization as regards the masses of women and its belief in the revolutionary role that women can play in the revolutionary process generally. The fact that women have taken their place in the People's Assembly of the Democratic Yemen and a woman has been appointed a judge has aroused the rancour of the reactionary forces and in particular Saudi reaction, which considered this to be a divergence away from Islamic traditions. The fact is that the fear of the reactionary forces when Yemeni women began to exercise their democratic rights emanates from their fear of the struggle that women can wage for wresting their political and social rights. The Yemeni women's struggle and their gaining equal rights with men in the various social spheres becomes a symbol for the struggle of their counterparts in societies that practice oppression against them and bar them from exercising their rights in life.

It is imperative that we point out that the National Front Political Organization includes in the program of action for the forthcoming five years an increasing role of the masses in political life and direction of the affairs of the State, so that we may enable the revolution and its experience to avoid the dangers that are normally engendered by isolating the masses and their non-participation in political work. During the forthcoming years the role of the masses in the revolutionary process will become greater. Their role in the new economic forms will be consolidated and the same will occur in the process of production and initiatives. They will also receive support from the Political Organization for development of their organizations and deep-rooting of democratic traditions in their ranks for the development of the revolutionary experience in our country.

For the sake of an increased and greater role in political life the National Front Political Organization is paving the way before creation of the local People's Councils in the Provinces to be the legislative authority of the workers, peasants and other toiling sections. The establishment of the local People's Councils will assist the toilers of our country in exercising their democratic right in legislation in a direct manner and will enable them to find

realistic solutions for their problems linked to the process of multi-sided development.

Q.9: During the Fifth Congress you determined your alignment with scientific socialism thought as a guide for work. This decision came under the orientation to unite the sections of national democratic action within the framework of the National Front as a prelude to the creation of the vanguard party. The School of Socialist Sciences, the changing of the educational syllabi and the dispatch of scholars abroad contribute to the consolidation of this line. However the decisive factor remains the creation of the vanguard party. What are the obstacles that stand in the way of accomplishing the national democratic alliance as a prelude to the creation of the vanguard party?

A.9: We have declared our alignment with the scientific socialism theory. This alignment was a conscious one and in response to the aspirations of the revolution. We are in an age characterized by the conflict between two ideologies: scientific socialism and capitalism. As a national liberation movement we had no choice except to select the ideology that represents the salvation of the toilers and peasants from exploitation and backwardness and embodies their aspirations in a progressive life free of every exploitation.

We were not satisfied with a theoretical belief in this ideology, but we commenced its study from School of Socialist Sciences for members of the Political Organization and the other democratic sections and the cadres of the State organs to take lessons in scientific socialism theory. Our estimation was that the propagation of the ideas of scientific socialism and the strengthening of the ideological consciousness of the members will provide the conditions for connecting the theoretical attitude with practical application and the condition for ensuring the successful progress of the revolutionary process. The Political Organization attached great importance to the educational syllabi for students at schools by introducing scientific socialism as a subject equipping the rising generation with correct ideas about the various issues connected to life.

The aim of the National Front Political Organization, with the spread of the ideas of scientific socialism and the growth of the power of the working class, is the creation of the vanguard party. This is so because the undertaking of the revolutionary tasks and the creation of a progressive experience in our country can only be possible with the existence of a party that can play the leading role in the revolutionary process and in leading the struggles of the Yemeni working class and its toiling allies. During the past years, the thought of the National Front

Political Organization has been concentrated up on this issue. It was among the resolutions affirmed by the Fifth Congress and which emphasized the importance of building such a party. However the establishment of a party cannot in our estimation be accomplished by the issue of a resolution or decree. It is imperative that the subjective and objective conditions pertaining to the Party must first exist. These require continuous struggle. For this reason the National Front Political Organization began a democratic dialogue with the other progressive organizations.

However, it is difficult to imagine that firm belief in the issue of the party will make the path leading thereto easier and not compounded with dangers. We believe that the establishment of correct party work will inevitably pass through a difficult path but it is the correct one. We have to imagine the unsound relationship that existed between the political organizations that today effect a dialogue in Democratic Yemen, before and after the stage of national liberation and until the 22nd June 1969 Rectification Movement, and thereafter, to imagine the difficulties that will confront all in the beginning when they attempt to establish the experience of unified democratic action. The greatest achievement that we have accomplished in Democratic Yemen is the elimination of the complexes of the past and the creation of mutual confidence and belief in the vanguard party as an objective for whose establishment we work.

It would have been possible for the National Front Political Organization to consider the issue of unified national action, as it possesses power and the organs thereof and has a broad party and mass foundation and the capability to lead the revolutionary process alone. It could also have imposed the unity of national action in the manner it desires. However, because it has a principled stand as regards national democratic action based on the theory of scientific socialism, it raised the slogan of democratic dialogue and practically put it into practice as a prelude to the establishment of correct and united party work. Those who are afraid of the national alliance are those who have no confidence in themselves and resort to its rejection and the practice of terrorist methods against the progressives and democrats and particularly when power is in their hands. Many are the examples of this in many countries.

The National Political Organization is not afraid of a national alliance based on the principles of scientific socialism. All those who believe in, and defend the ideology of the working class, its interests and aims cannot historically be except within one party organization or else they would lose the justification for their existence. We aspire for the establishment of the vanguard party and believe that

within the National Front Political Organization, the Popular Vanguard Party (the Baath Party previously) and the People's Democratic Union (Al-Salafi Youth previously) there are potentials which we believe will create the possibility of unity of the revolutionary energies and action for the establishment of the vanguard party.

The dialogue that is taking place between these organizations, although it may have taken a long time, has achieved positive steps and the points of view of the organizations undertaking the dialogue have become nearer as regards the issue of united party work. We hope that the dialogue will end in the near future so that we may take a step forwards in united party work.

The supporting stand of the National Front Political Organization for the unity of the sections of national democratic action is complemented also by the principled stand as regards the unity of the world revolutionary movement with its three forces. The Fifth Congress affirmed that the revolution in Democratic Yemen is an integral part of the forces directing world revolution: the socialist camp, the working class in capitalist countries and the world national liberation movement. Our alignment to the side of the socialist countries in their struggle against imperialism, injustice and oppression practiced against the world peoples, is an alignment based upon scientific socialism and the principle of international solidarity between the forces of liberation and progress in the world.

It is necessary to distinguish between alignment to the side of the world revolution movement and at its head the socialist countries in their struggle against world imperialism and at its head American imperialism and peaceful co-existence between countries of different social systems.

Democratic Yemen does not reject dealing with non-socialist countries and it established relations with many countries within socialist camps. However, in its relations whether with capitalist or semi-capitalist countries it starts from the basis of respect for their national independence and non-interference in their domestic affairs. It rejects every aid or co-operation behind which are hidden the greed of neo-colonialism and which infringes upon its national independence.

The waves of distortion flung by Saudi reaction and the Qaboos regime as regards our relations with the socialist countries and which depict the Democratic Yemen as having left the fold of Arabism and Islam, aim at creating a condition of encirclement and seige of our country at the hands of the backward Arab

regimes, at a time when they continue with machinations and aggression through the mercenaries on our borders and the consolidation of their relations with the imperialist forces.

Inspite of everything, the alignment to the side of the socialist countries as a decisive force of our epoch defending the freedom and progress of the people, is a principled stand from which we will not be deterred. We find the relations with these countries more nearer to us than relations with American imperialism and its lackey Saudi reaction. Moreover, we have not committed aggression against Saudi Arabia or the Qaboos regime. On the contrary, the territory of our country has always been subjected to the aggression and sabotage of mercenaries of Saudi and Omani reaction.

Further, we believe that the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution formulated by the Fifth Congress and the process of subsequent development after this stage cannot be achieved except with the supporting role of the socialist countries and through benefiting from their experiences in the process of construction and development. The socialist countries present honest aid to Democratic Yemen for overcoming the difficulties of domestic growth. They have assisted in the execution of many projects of the three year Development Plan and will also aid many of the important projects during the five year Plan. Naturally we cannot also ignore the fraternal aid given by some of the fraternal Arab countries. On the contrary, we very highly value this aid and hope that the relations of co-operation and assistance with the brothers and sisters will develop.

Q.10: During the class political and military battles with the enemies of the revolution at home and abroad the revolution's military organs have taken a popular and productive nature. For the sake of defending the revolution, as the imperialist and reactionary plotting grows, the importance of ideological and political work among the ranks of these organs becomes important, along with the improvement of their technical competence, arming, and training. How do you face all of these tasks in the various military organs of the revolution?

A.10: The experience of defending the revolution and its gains throughout the past years has proved that the military establishments (the armed forces, the people's police, the popular forces and the people's militia) are the honest defenders of the revolution and the progressive system in Democratic Yemen. They have waged many military battles against the mercenary forces supplied by Saudi reaction and inflicted successive defeats upon the forces of the enemy. In Democratic Yemen the army and the people's police have become the class suppres-

sive force in the hands of the workers and peasants alliance, after the revolution had, following the 22nd June Rectification Movement, undertaken the liquidation of the military elements opposed to the development of the people and the revolution and which constitute the reserves of neo-colonialism.

With the increased dangers posed by imperialism and reaction to the revolution, we had to broaden the popular military force and attract the masses to the defence of the revolution and prepare them militarily to carry arms in the face of the enemy. Therefore, we created a new military organization, the organization of the people's militia which is established on the basis of preparation of workers and peasants militarily at work and production sites so that they undertake self-defence at their production sites in factories, state organs, the public sector, state farms and co-operatives. The role of this military organization is not restricted to acts of defending the gains of the revolution. It is being prepared in the use of heavy arms so that it may be ready to engage in battles should the revolution be endangered. The fact is that the enrollment of thousands of workers and poor peasants in the ranks of the militia has affirmed the extent of the readiness of our people to undertake the tasks of the social development and defence of the revolution at the same time.

The growth of popular armed masses had benefitted the revolution in alleviating the military burdens. Thus, many of the battles waged against the mercenaries were carried out by the armed masses and decided by themselves alone in the areas without our being burdened with heavy costs which we would have had to bear were the army the only one engaged in the battle. During the past few years our military establishments not only gained wide experience in defensive battles but they also gained new scientific knowledge in various military spheres. We have introduced advanced weapons. They today undertake their national duty towards the revolution and consolidate their competence and capability to engage in battles in defence of the independence and sovereignty of their homeland's territories.

The National Front Political Organization links between the defence task in time of war and the productive task in time of peace. The various military establishments play a positive role in the production field by their participation in execution of projects and popular initiatives and the popular voluntary works. During the forthcoming years the increasing role of the official and popular military forces in the production process will become greater. The National Front Political Organization also prepares military and productive programs to transform these forces into productive military forces to reach the creation of a productive and

fighting army.

The National Front Political Organization accords increasing concern for the education of the military forces in the ideas of scientific socialism, because we believe that there never can be any separation between military and ideological education. The military establishments in Democratic Yemen gain their historic position in the revolutionary process, only when they are armed with the theory of scientific socialism because through that they understand why they fight and for which cause. For this, the National Front Political Organization acts to transform the military college from its sole military nature to become of a military and political nature. Its task should be the education of the military students in the principles and aims of the revolution, scientific socialism culture, military lessons and the graduation of officers qualified to play their revolutionary military role. In addition to that, the school of socialist Sciences organizes short and long courses for the organization's members from the armed forces so that they become political guides who assist in raising the political awareness of the soldiers.

Besides the military establishments the other mass organizations such as the Workers' Confederation, students, youth, women, popular defence committees organizations, etc., play an increasing role in the defence of our revolution. The Political Organization accords great concern for these organizations because they in fact are the broad framework which comprises the masses of our people linked to the revolution by interest and destiny. At the present time the efforts of the National Front Political Organization are exerted for the completion and development of the popular defence committees. This organization acquires special importance besides the other mass organizations which will play an important role in the life of our people's revolution.

This importance which this organization acquires is consequential to its comprising in its ranks all the social classes and sections of workers, peasants, students, women, etc. whether in residential areas of the towns or the countryside. It is also a result of its undertaking a social function of the utmost importance to the interests of the masses of the people. The defence committees have to a great extent alleviated the burdens borne by the State organs and which were resulting from social and family problems. They now enjoy the support of the citizens.

The establishment of the popular defence organization has aroused the fears of the enemy imperialist and reactionary forces. Its role was not limited to the resolving of social problems but it continues to grow for the defence of the revolution and surveillance of the movements

of the revolution's enemies within the country. Every individual in the organization loyal to his homeland and the revolutionary changes occurring in the homeland will exert every struggle effort for maintenance of the revolution and the progressive regime.

Q.11: On the basis of the Agrarian Reform Law which was implemented by the poor peasants and agricultural workers through organized uprisings under the guidance and command of the National Front, you have established the co-operative and state farms. What are the results of this experience until now?

A.11: Following the 22nd June Rectification Movement, the National Front Political Organization had to liberate the poor peasants in the countryside from the gross exploitation practised against them by the feudalists and big landowners for many years. For this reason it issued in 1970 an Agrarian Reform Law which responds to the aspirations of the peasants for liberation from the injustice of the feudalists and effecting a radical solution of the agricultural question. Our estimation was that the correct implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law must depend upon the struggle of the masses of the peasants themselves and not on the State organs. Naturally, in our stand we started from the experience of agrarian reform in some of the national liberation regimes which depended upon the State organs, and whose results led to the continuation of some aspects of feudal exploitation of the masses of peasants and the growth of the agricultural capitalism. The experiences of agrarian reform that depended upon implementation by State organs affirmed the power of feudalism and that it would not hesitate to employ every suppressive and terrorist method to protect its large holdings of land in the face of implementation of the slogan "land for its tillers".

Before our National Front Political Organization pushed the peasants of the countryside to the process of struggle for liberation of the land, it had to undertake the process of political enlightenment amidst the peasants so that the class struggle may be more deeply imprinted among them and destroy the myths planted by feudalism among them regarding respect for the sanctity of private ownership and non-interference therewith on the basis that Allah provides whomsoever He wishes.

The Supreme Political Committee of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform headed by Salem Robaya' Ali, assistant secretary general and Chairman of the Presidential Council was established and so were the branch political committees and the peasants committees. The Supreme Political Committee was able through its relentless activity to create political situations among the peasants who undertook their first uprising in the south-

ern district of the Third Province on 7th October 1970. This district is considered to be one of the richest enclaves of feudalism in our country.

The 7th October uprising was a genuine class battle between feudalism and the poor peasants and it confirmed the soundness of the course pursued by the Political Organization in implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law. Thereafter the peasants continued with their class struggle against monopolizers of the land in the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth provinces. The uprising comprised the various areas where feudalism was entrenched. As a result of these uprisings the peasants gained control of nearly 135 thousand feddans and nearly 20 thousand families benefited from it.

It was natural that the political organization should organize the benefitting from seized lands in a manner harmonious with the guidance of the Political Organization and the revolutionary uplift of the peasants. Our aim was not merely to regain the lands from feudalism and distribute them among the peasants; we also aimed at creating a spirit of co-operation between the peasants as regards the land and the issues of agricultural production. Until last year, 38 agricultural co-operatives were established having about 26 thousand peasant members and 7 vocational co-operatives, a number of fisheries co-operatives and 40 co-operatives for services and consumption. In addition to the co-operatives, 28 state farms were also established.

The government of the revolution extended to the state farms and the co-operatives various aid such as machinery, credits and chemical fertilizers to help them in increasing production for raising the material life of the rural peasants and at the same time strengthening of the national economy. The State also established a number of agricultural hiring stations. The peasants of our country witnessed political activity in the past years for evaluation of their struggle experience as regards the land issue and formulation of the vistas of their struggle. The poor Peasants Congress was convened in June, 1971 and the First Co-operative Congress in November, 1971. During these two congresses the peasants reviewed the agrarian reform experience and the co-operative sector. Many resolutions that consolidate the struggle of the peasants and construct new relations in the countryside were passed. In April, 1973 the Agricultural Marketing Congress was convened as an extension of the Co-operative Congress and the Peasants Congress. This Congress reviewed domestic marketing of agricultural produce for liberation from exploitation, chaos and fluctuations practised by middlemen at the expense of the simple consumer.

The implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law through organization of the peasants' struggle

and supporting and guiding them has enabled the revolution to destroy feudal ownership and its exploiting relations and establish a new form of ownership based on co-operation and joint work between producers as well as on the establishment of State farms for construction of new non-exploiting production relations that satisfy the daily livelihood requirements of the masses. The co-operative sector and the State sector today play a growing role in the national economy. During the forthcoming five years the activity of the co-operatives and the State farms will be concentrated upon increasing production and exploitation of natural resources and provision of agricultural yields connected with industry. In this sphere the State will provide the technical and material support to assist the co-operatives and State farms in achieving the tasks posed before them. It will also expand the co-operative movement by attracting more farmers to its ranks and developing the forms of co-operative work as well as establishing more State farms.

Through the measures we take in the field of agriculture we aim at effecting an agricultural uplift on the path of achieving the tasks of the national democratic revolution which were defined in the program of the stage issued by the Fifth Congress.

Q.12: How do you view the possibility of accomplishing the democratic tasks at regional levels to reach creation of the united democratic Yemen?

A.12: Ever since the Yemeni people achieved their national liberation with the victory of their two national revolutions: the 26th September, 1962 revolution and the 14th October, 1963 revolution. The paths of subsequent development in the process of constructing their new life were opened up. The priestly Imamic regime in Sana'a and the semi-feudal colonialist regime in Aden used to constitute a great obstacle before the revolutionary uplift of our Yemeni masses.

Because of historic subjective and objective conditions, the Yemeni national struggle led to the creation of two political entities in the two parts of the region although the activity of the political organizations used to be undertaken at the plane of the whole region. The division caused by the Turkish and British colonialists in our Yemeni homeland led to the establishment of two political regimes, a priestly and feudal one in Sana'a and a colonialist, semi-feudal one in Aden. However, it was not able to divide the single Yemeni national spirit among the toilers and the poor. The longing for one homeland, the Yemen Motherland, continued to be the pulpit of all Yemeni strugglers and progressives.

Unfortunately, these conditions which were

the concoction of foreign colonialists and were deeply rooted after them by the Imamic regime of the Hamid-ud-din family placed fetters on the Yemeni people's national struggle and made its tasks in the north different from those in the south. The weakest link was the Imamic regime in Sana'a and our estimation was that should this regime fall, it would grant the Yemeni masses in the south the opportunity to wage a national liberation struggle against the British colonialists. It was not possible for any of these Yemeni political organizations to wage a liberation struggle against the Imamic and colonialist regimes at the same time, as until the end of the fifties, there was no revolutionary ally near to the Yemeni land who would be able to support the national struggle to bring about the downfall of the two regimes at once.

Thus, the 26th September revolution in Sana'a in 1962 constituted the basis for the continuity of the Yemeni people's struggle for the completion of their liberation by expelling the British colonialists. In this way did the 14th October 1963 revolution wage a long armed struggle against British colonialism for more than four years until the colonialists were expelled in November, 1967.

The Yemeni people's national liberation struggle took two forms: the form of a military movement of the army in Sana'a which was followed by a struggle uplift of the masses that took the character of a popular revolution for protecting the September revolution and defending the Republican regime. The organized and armed struggle in Aden that ended with the accomplished national liberation and the final expulsion of the colonialists constituted the other form.

We must note that the 26th September and the 14th October revolutions were not led by one Yemeni political organization. In the north the revolution was led by Free Nationalist Officers who had suffered from the yoke of the priestly Imamic injustice that prevailed over the broadest toiling masses and finally the Yemen Arab Republic was established. In the South, the armed struggle was led by the National Front Political Organization until November, 1967 when the British were forced to leave the country and recognize the people's national independence and the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Although the national liberation forces that led the 26th September and the 14th October revolutions were not gathered by a united political organization, yet the popular national struggle flowed in one course: unity of the Yemeni national cause, and the unity of the land, and used to be inspired by the Yemeni spirit seeking establishment of the united democratic Yemen.

In the course of the struggle against the enemies of the Yemeni people's liberation and progress, the Yemeni masses were united in struggle and did not distinguish in this struggle between the liberation cause in the north and the liberation cause in the south. Thus, during the years of defence of revolution and Republic of September, the workers, poor peasants, soldiers and revolutionary intellectuals from all Yemeni areas in the north and the south stood at the same barricade against the common enemy made up of the royalist forces and Saudi reaction. During the years of the armed struggle in the south all Yemenis stood also side by side with arms in hands against British colonialism and its lackeys, the sultans. Because of the absence of the single revolutionary implement that leads the national liberation struggle of the 26th September and 14th October revolutions, it was natural that that should lead to the establishment of two political entities in both parts of Yemen, with the continuation of the national Yemeni spirit and its unity among all of the national, progressive forces and all honest nationals.

As a result the tasks subsequent to the national liberation in both parts have been different. Thus, while the tasks posted before the revolution in the southern part of the region have become the tasks of the stage of the national democratic revolution and what it imposes in the form of revolutionary steps to liberate the national economy from the domination of foreign capital in the towns and feudal exploitation in the countryside, the tasks posed before the September revolution in the north are those of completion of national liberation and represented by the defence of the revolution and its republican system from the dangers and aggression of imperialist forces and Saudi reaction.

During the Fifth General Congress the National Front Political Organization considered the experience of the Yemeni national democratic struggle and the perspective of its unity on the path of establishing the united democratic Yemen and achieving the Yemeni revolution's strategy.

When the National Front Political Organization formulated the program of the stage of the national democratic revolution which was adopted by the Fifth General Congress, it affirmed that "this program constitutes a strategic program for the National Front for the stage of the national democratic revolution but it does not constitute a comprehensive strategic program for the Yemeni revolution and its vanguard party. It is an integral part of their strategy".

We believe that the revolutionary transformations that have taken place in Democratic Yemen and the firm progress towards accomplish-

ment of the tasks of the national democratic revolution are connected to the national democratic struggle in the Yemeni region and are a part of the revolutionary process of the Yemeni people. We believe that there is still a period of national democratic struggle which may be short or long before the northern part of the Yemeni region enters upon the stage that the southern part of the homeland now passes through.

When the whole Yemeni homeland enters upon this stage, it will be possible for the Yemeni people to achieve their great national dream, i.e., the establishment of the united democratic Yemen and the achievement of the strategy of the Yemeni revolution. This is so because we cannot imagine the possibility of effecting a material and spiritual revolutionary uplift of the Yemeni people without the unity of the land and the natural and human resources and without the revolutionary implement which is based upon a program that responds to the nature, tasks and peculiarities of the stage in both parts to reach achievement of a single strategic aim.

Progressing on this path, the National Front Political Organization undertakes its revolutionary duty towards the Yemeni people's homeland, the cause of its unity and the establishment of the united democratic Yemen. It concentrates its efforts with the sections of national democratic action and all honest Yemenis for creating the favorable subjective and objective conditions for the unity of the Yemeni people and their progress forward.

A positive step forward was taken when the Unity Agreement was signed in Cairo with the brethren from the north after the September 1972 war which was fermented by Saudi reaction and its war mongering lackeys and which they wanted by it to drive the Yemeni people into the cauldron of a civil war and distract them from the pursuit of their struggle for unity and progress. Since the signing of the Agreement and the constitution of the various union commissions,

tangible progress has been achieved in bringing points of view on many of the economic, constitutional and social issues nearer.

In this regard, the Political Organization is sure that the democratic dialogue continues for the precise implementation of the unity of the efforts of patriots and the progressives and the mass organizations for the establishment of the united democratic Yemen. The struggle for unity on the part of the Political Organization on the official level does not mean not to proceed with the same struggle on the level of the sections of national democratic action for achieving the unity of the Yemeni revolution's implement. We believe that the decisive factor in the unity of the Yemeni people and the achievement of the material and spiritual uplift of the people in the region is the unity of the democratic and progressive forces within a revolutionary implement on the level of the whole region. The establishment of the united state without dependence upon the national movement as its base and without dependence upon the broad masses with the genuine stake in unity cannot be imagined. This is an issue which was vividly emphasized by the program of the stage of the national democratic revolution and which was affirmed also by the sections of national democratic action and all other patriotic and progressive elements. It is an issue which we consider to be harmonious with the aspirations of the Yemeni masses in the creation of a united homeland that promotes their progress.

We stand by the side of any effort and any action whether on the official level or the level of the national movement that aims at shattering the fetters that impede the unity and progress of the Yemeni people. In order that the efforts of the national struggle may be crowned with victory, the need of the people increases for exercising their democratic rights, and to pave the way before them to mobilize their national movement, to ensure correct movement towards the United Democratic Yemen.



Yemeni soldiers defending the Revolution.